

**Public Library Services for Immigrants in Canada**  
**Resource Guide**  
**LIS 598**  
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Li Xue in cooperation with Citizenship and Immigration Canada recognized four difficulties encountered by newcomers to Canada in their first four years. They are:

The Canadian Library Association has a Position Statement on Library Services to Linguistic and Ethnic Minorities. It is older but still relevant to professionals:

[http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Position\\_Statements&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=3051](http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Position_Statements&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=3051)

1. Finding employment
2. Accessing education and training
3. Accessing healthcare, and
4. Finding housing

All of these difficulties are ones that can be dealt with at the library if the library has the resources and the staff to help them.

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/research/integration/index.asp>

For some perspective on what the libraries in the United States are doing, you can access a report from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service called "Library Services for Immigrants: A Report on Current Practices". It is a snapshot of what innovative libraries are doing for their immigrant communities to help them assimilate and learn about their new adopted country.

<http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/G-1112.pdf>

The American Library Association has a Guideline for the Development and Promotion of Multilingual Collections and Services:

<http://www.ala.org/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidemultilingual>

The ALA also has a wiki on serving multicultural populations which includes formal and informal resources such as published books and papers as well as blogs.

[http://wikis.ala.org/professionaltips/index.php?](http://wikis.ala.org/professionaltips/index.php?title=Serving_Multicultural_Populations)

[title=Serving\\_Multicultural\\_Populations](http://wikis.ala.org/professionaltips/index.php?title=Serving_Multicultural_Populations)

Programs for newcomers have to embrace a holistic approach, not just providing for the immediate need to learn English or French but information on how to live in the country they now call home. The Toronto Public Library has newcomer programs that embrace the whole person, from parenting under new Canadian laws to how to engage in citizenship practices to how to deal with cold weather and even on dental care. See Toronto Public Library's services for newcomers [here](#).

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Caidi, Nadia, and Danielle Allard. 2005. "Social Inclusion of Newcomers to Canada an Information Problem?" *Library and Information Science Research* 27 (3): 302-324  
-- The authors contend that the best way to create effective immigrant programs within libraries is to first understand information seeking behaviours, social inclusion and social capital. They say that creating a program that focuses on what we as native North Americans know and how we know it will not be of much use to newcomers who know different things, learn differently and make different sense out of what it is they know. Similarly, care must be taken when dealing with newcomers because they may have a completely different understanding of what a library is in North America. It may have different connotations and create misunderstandings with newcomers if they do not know the North American understanding of the concept of a library. The authors state that since most government and intergovernmental programs are aimed at those immigrants in the first stage of immigration, such as food and shelter, most of the actual barriers to social inclusion occur in the second stage of immigration, including job search information, permanent housing and school information, and this is where libraries should be targeting immigrant populations for provision of information. The authors conclusion is that libraries must offer services to newcomers that are both understandable and meaningful for them. This includes service and programs in their own languages so as to make it more accessible and accurate.

Mestre, Lori. 2009. *Librarians Serving Diverse Populations: Challenges and Opportunities*. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries.  
-- The author gives a front to back guide for hiring into and working in a position such as community librarian. She starts with the types of positions that could be called multicultural librarians and how to prepare people still in library school to take on roles such as these, including the types of courses they should take if possible and what sorts of undergraduate degrees would prepare someone for a career in multiculturalism. She then goes on to provide a broad outline of services that should be offered as well as how to offer them, advertise them and how to gain support for them from the library staff and management and the community at large. She also includes a chapter on the realities of a position such as a multicultural librarian, giving a rundown of the pitfalls one can encounter, from unsupportive management to budget problems and huge workloads and even non-usage from the community being targeted. She goes on to talk about multicultural positions smacking of tokenism. The author then concludes with ideas for how to reform library school curriculums to embrace and promote such positions in order to promote acceptance among library school students and graduates.

Cuban, Sondra. 2007. *Serving New Immigrant Communities in the Library*. Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited.

--In *Serving New Immigrant Communities in the Library*, Cuban explains how libraries can serve the immigrant communities more effectively from their point of views. This book includes very practical guides for librarians who seek ways to serve immigrant communities. e.g. partnering checklist

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. 2011. "Facts and figures 2010 – Immigration overview: Permanent and temporary residents." Accessed December 4, 2011.  
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2010/index.asp>

*:Facts and Figures 2010: Immigration Overview–Permanent and Temporary Residents* presents the annual intake of permanent residents by category of immigration and of temporary residents by yearly status from 1986 to 2010. The report also shows the number of temporary residents present on December 1st of each year for the same period. The main body of the publication consists of a series of statistical tables and charts covering the ten-year period from 2001 to 2010. (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010)

Frideres, James, M. L. Burstein, and John Biles. 2008. *Immigration and Integration in Canada in the Twenty-first Century*. Kingston, Ont: School of Policy Studies, Queen's University.

--Understanding the user group is extremely critical in order to serve the group better. The *Immigration and Integration in Canada in the Twenty-first Century* describes main issues regarding immigrants in Canada from immigration policies to promoting social inclusion.

## WEBSITES

American Library Association. 2008. "ALA releases groundbreaking study on library service to new Americans." Accessed December 4, 2011.  
[http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/olos/nonenglishspeakers/docs/LI\\_study\\_pressrelease.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/olos/nonenglishspeakers/docs/LI_study_pressrelease.pdf)

American Library Association. 2008. "How to serve the world at your library ALA."  
[http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/olos/toolkits/servetheworld/LI\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/olos/toolkits/servetheworld/LI_toolkit.pdf)

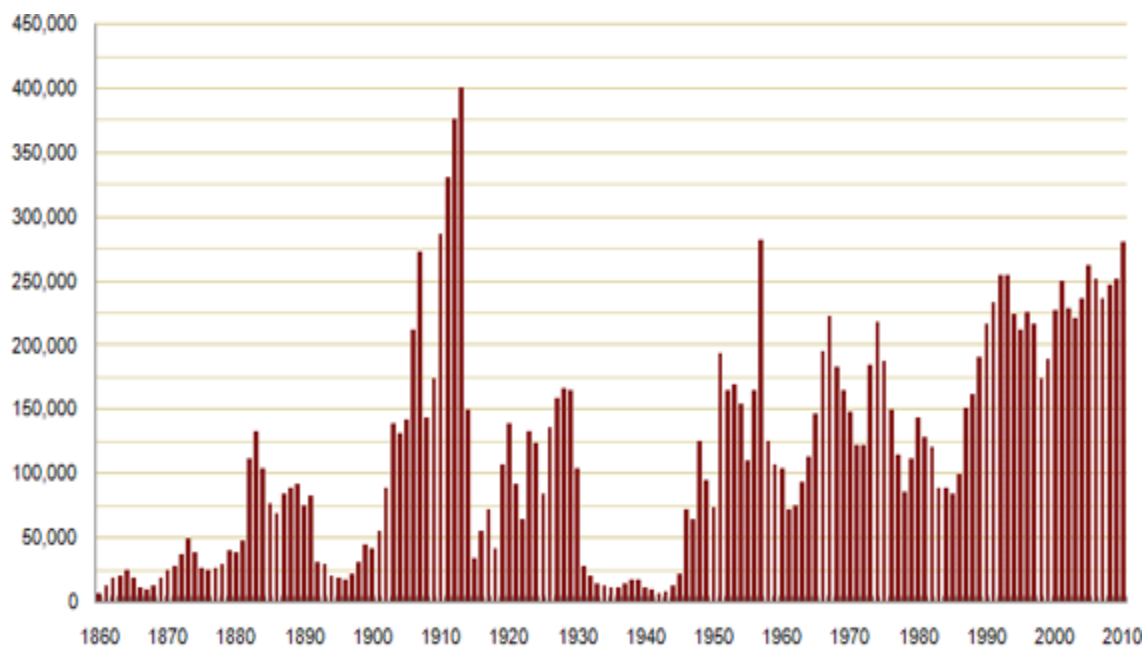
: this is an excellent resource guide for current and future librarians serving the diverse immigrant communities in the public library setting. This toolkit includes a variety of resources such as real examples of successful programs for immigrants from public libraries and tips for improving library services for the immigrant population at the library.

## PRESS

American Library Association. 2008. "Denise Davis Discusses Library Services and Programs for Non-English Speakers." Accessed

December 4, 2011. <http://www.pio.ala.org/visibility/?p=26>

--In this interview, Denise Davis, director of the ALA's Office for Research and Statistics talks about some key findings from 2007's study about library services and programs developed for non-English speakers. During the interview, Davis points out the barriers for library uses among immigrants. She mentions that basic reading and library habit and general literacy skills are some of the barriers for immigrants' library uses while outreach services improve immigrants' library uses.



**Canada – Permanent residents, 1860 to 2010 (provided by Citizenship and Immigration Canada)**

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2010/permanent/index.asp#permanent>